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Remarks of Elaine Ikeda
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Members of the California Performance Review Commission,

Thank you for the opportunity to address you today at this public hearing focused on Education, Training and Volunteerism. My name is Elaine Ikeda, and I am the Executive Director of California Campus Compact. I am honored to have this opportunity to speak to you about ETV33, the recommendation to require community service of public college and university students.

I represent California Campus Compact, a membership organization of 55 college and university presidents throughout California who are committed to engaging students in community service (volunteer service) and academic service learning (which is embedded in courses). Our membership includes two-year and four-year public and private higher education institutions with staff specifically dedicated to promoting the civic development of our students. We have been in existence for 15 years and we provide training and funding to colleges to assist them in involving more students in service experiences. Our membership includes all 23 of the California State University campuses and 6 of the 9 University of California campuses, in addition to some community colleges and many private universities in the state.

For the past twenty years there has been an increasing amount of research that documents the positive outcomes of students engaging in volunteer service and service-learning, and there are important differences between the two forms of service. I'd like to draw on the research and best practices that have been culled from the field to comment on the proposed recommendation and some key challenges that must be addressed. I have phrased these in the form of some questions that require serious consideration:

Connecting Service with Learning

- What is the connection between the proposed community service requirement (a requirement that students serve as volunteers) and the core teaching and learning mission of higher education?

Service-learning, as opposed to volunteerism, is a teaching methodology designed to link academic study with community service and it provides students the opportunity to reflect upon the links between theory and practice. Our experience and research has demonstrated that academic service-learning conducted in a high quality manner, can have lasting positive effects on students. When there is a strong reflective component that helps students make sense of their service experience and connect their service to the academic content, we see profound positive outcomes on student's sense of civic responsibility, student's engagement in the course, retention of the course material, and a deeper sense of responsibility to the communities they are serving than when required to simply volunteer a set number of hours.

Fiscal Impact

- Who will determine the method for tracking, verifying, and recording the service activities and hours for each student? How much will it cost in staff time to enter and track this information? Is there staffing on each campus and within the community to manage the administrative aspects of such a requirement?

- Who will determine what will constitute community service? Will mowing my grandmother's lawn suffice?

- Who will pay for the cost of security clearances such as fingerprinting (which may be required when working with children) or background checks? Current estimates on the costs of these screening procedures range from $75-$100 per person.

- What are the risk management and liability issues? Does current university and college insurance cover any and all risk issues related to the service work/community work? What is the liability for harm caused *by* student volunteers? What is the liability for harm caused *to* student volunteers?

- Will the campus have to provide transportation to the service site? Who will pay for that?

Quality of Service (for students and for recipients of service)

- We know from experience that it is very important to provide an orientation for students to help prepare them to enter the community and serve. We know that students may be entering communities that are very different than they are familiar with. They need diversity training, cultural sensitivity training, and depending on what they will be doing, they may need skills training? Who will provide this preparation and training? What kind of burden might this place on community agencies that are already overworked, understaffed, and under-funded?

- Who will supervise the community service volunteers (on campus and in the community)?

- Mandating volunteer service without clear learning objectives can have a serious affect on the attitudes of students who are serving. Do we really want students going out to serve in our communities who may be disgruntled about having to fulfill this requirement?

- What impact will this requirement have on community agencies and their abilities to serve their communities? Are they prepared to handle the significant number of students that will be approaching them for volunteer opportunities? Is this a fair burden to be placing on them?

Conclusion

While we recognize the enormous potential for college students to demonstrate the public good of higher education and "give back," we support high quality academic service-learning experiences as a more effective method to achieve these outcomes.

These are just a handful of the many questions and concerns that could be raised about a community volunteer service mandate. We believe that there are many ways to build in opportunities for students to engage in community service without such a requirement. For example, manycolleges are integrating a community service experience or service-learning into the freshman year experience or freshman orientation programs. Residence life, athletics, and honors programs often provide opportunities for students to engage in high quality service experiences. Hundreds of courses in California's universities and colleges already integrate service-learning and more could be developed.

I support the philosophy of student involvement in communities as a way of learning and developing, that is after all, what our organization is all about. However, this recommendation must not overlook the serious fiscal implications that a community service requirement will have on campuses and community agencies, nor the need for careful and thoughtful implementation with appropriate support structures.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify and California Campus Compact stands ready to assist in any further examination of this recommendation.

Service-Learning Is...

Defining Service-Learning

In the past several years, service-learning has spread rapidly throughout communities, K-12 institutions, and colleges and universities. In a recent survey of its member institutions, Campus Compact gathered information on trends in community involvement and service across a good cross-section of the nation's colleges and universities (Compact, 2001). During the 1999-2000 academic year, among the 349 campuses that responded to the survey,

- 712,000 students had participated in some form of service
- 12.2 percent of faculty were offering service-learning courses
- 6,272 service-learning courses were taught
- 9 percent required service-learning courses for graduation

The recently issued report, entitled "Learning in Deed" from the National Commission on Service-Learning (Fiske, 2001) quoted National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) estimates that in the 2000-2001 academic year, more than 13 million school students were involved in service and service-learning. NCES also found that between 1984 and 1997, the number of K-12 students involved in service-learning programs rose from 900,000 to over 12.6 million while the proportion of high school students participating in service-learning grew from 2 percent to 25 percent during the same time period.

Of course, in interpreting all these statistics about the growth of service-learning we must remember that not everyone uses the same definitions of service-learning. Service-learning is still evolving and has not yet settled into a shared vocabulary, a set of common ideas and theories and a generally accepted approach to validation. This has encouraged a great deal of experimentation, discovery and local adaptation, but it is also impossible to have one definition for all service-learning programs.

What is Service-Learning?

Even though there are many different interpretations of service-learning as well as different objectives and contexts, we can say that there is a core concept upon which all seem to agree:

Service-learning combines service objectives with learning objectives with the intent that the activity change both the recipient and the provider of the service. This is accomplished by combining service tasks with structured opportunities that link the task to self-reflection, self-discovery, and the acquisition and comprehension of values, skills, and knowledge content.

For example, if school students collect trash out of an urban streambed, they are providing a service to the community as volunteers; a service that is highly valued and important. When school students collect trash from an urban streambed, then analyze what they found and possible sources so they can share the results with residents of the neighborhood along with suggestions for reducing pollution, they are engaging in service-learning. In the service-learning example, the students are providing an important service to the community AND, at the same time, learning about water quality and laboratory analysis, developing an understanding of pollution issues, learning to interpret science issues to the public, and practicing communications skills by speaking to residents. They may also reflect on their personal and career interests in science, the environment, public policy or other related areas. Thus, we see that service-learning combines SERVICE with LEARNING in intentional ways. There are many other illustrations of how the combination is transforming to both community and students. This is not to say that volunteer activities without a learning component are less important than service-learning, but that the two approaches are fundamentally different activities with different objectives. Both are valued components of a national effort to increase citizen involvement in community service, and at every age.

The National Commission on Service-Learning in its recently issued report entitled "Learning in Deed: The Power of Service-Learning for American Schools," offers a definition of service-learning that incorporated the most essential features common to service-learning across the country. According to the Commission, service-learning is different from volunteerism in that it is "a teaching and learning approach that integrates community service with academic study to enrich learning, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. "

In 1990, the Corporation for National and Community Service conception of service-learning said that it:

- Promotes learning through active participation in service experiences
- Provides structured time for students to reflect by thinking, discussing and/or writing about their service experience
- Provides an opportunity for students to use skills and knowledge in real-life situations
- Extends learning beyond the classroom and into the community
- Fosters a sense of caring for others (as adapted from the National and Community Service Act of 1990)

Because of its connection to content acquisition and student development, service-learning is often linked to school and college courses, and inspires these educational organizations to build strong partnerships with community-based organizations. Service-learning can also be organized and offered by community organizations with learning objectives or structured reflection activities for their participants. Whatever the setting, the core

element of service-learning is always the intent that both providers and recipients find the experience beneficial, even transforming.

What are the Characteristics of Service-Learning?

According to the National Commission on Service learning, service-learning:

- Links to academic content and standards
- Involves young people in helping to determine and meet real, defined community needs
- Is reciprocal in nature, benefiting both the community and the service providers by combining a service experience with a learning experience
- Can be used in any subject area so long as it is appropriate to learning goal
- Works at all ages, even among young children

Service-learning is *not*:

- An episodic volunteer program
- An add-on to an existing school or college curriculum
- Logging a set number of community service hours in order to graduate
- Compensatory service assigned as a form of punishment by the courts or by school administrators
- Only for high school or college students
- One-sided: benefiting only students or only the community

The distinctive element of service-learning is that it enhances the community through the service provided, but it also has powerful learning consequences for the students or others participating in providing a service. Service-learning is growing so rapidly because we can see it is having a powerful impact on young people and their development. According to Eyler & Giles, 1999,

service-learning is a form of experiential education where learning occurs through a cycle of action and reflection as students work with others through a process of applying what they are learning to community problems and, at the same time, reflecting upon their experience as they seek to achieve real objectives for the community and deeper understanding and skills for themselves.

In the process, students link personal and social development with academic and cognitive development. Eyler and Giles (1999) summarize their observations by saying that in the service-learning model, "experience enhances understanding; understanding leads to more effective action."

In general, authentic service-learning experiences have some common characteristics (taken mostly from Eyler and Giles 1999).

- They are positive, meaningful and real to the participants.
- They involve cooperative rather than competitive experiences and thus promote skills associated with teamwork and community involvement and citizenship.
- They address complex problems in complex settings rather than simplified problems in isolation.
- They offer opportunities to engage in problem-solving by requiring participants to gain knowledge of the specific context of their service-learning activity and community challenges, rather than only to draw upon generalized or abstract knowledge such as might come from a textbook. As a result, service-learning offers powerful opportunities to acquire the habits of critical thinking; i.e. the ability to identify the most important questions or issues within a real-world situation.
- They promote deeper learning because the results are immediate and uncontrived. There are no "right answers" in the back of the book.
- As a consequence of this immediacy of experience, service-learning is more likely to be personally meaningful to participants and to generate emotional consequences, to challenge values as well as ideas, and hence to support social, emotional and cognitive learning and development.

Resources Cited

Campus Compact. (2001). *Annual Service Statistics 2000*. Providence, Rhode Island: Brown University.

Eyler, J., & D. E. Giles, J. (1999). *Where's the Learning in Service-Learning?* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Fiske, E. B. (2001). *Learning in Deed. The Power of Service-Learning for American Schools*. Battle Creek, MI: W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

Click here for links to more service-learning statistics.

Questions to Consider for a Community Service Requirement

The following are general questions that should be addressed in the development of a community service requirement.

1. What are the purposes of the mandate?
2. How can colleges and universities best meet the purposes of the mandate?
3. How is the mandate connected to the "teaching and learning" mission of higher education?
4. Who should be involved in the development of the requirement?
5. How much time will be needed to develop a plan that meets the interests and needs of the governor, faculty, students, and community members so that all participants benefit from, or are benefited by, the requirement?
6. What will the process be to develop the service requirement?
7. What are the current opportunities available to students to perform community service on each campus?
8. How can a plan be built using the current opportunities that are available?
9. How will "community service" be defined?
10. How is "community" defined?
11. Will students receive credit for the community service activities?
12. How will completion of the requirement be recorded?
13. Who will be designated to work with students as they work to meet the requirement: a committee? An individual faculty or staff member? Academic affairs? Student affairs? Both?
14. What does it cost to effectively administer a community service requirement? Where will the funds come from?
15. Is there staffing on each campus and within the community to manage the administrative aspects of the requirement?
16. Is the mandate applicable to all students in the UC, CSU, and community colleges, regardless of circumstances?
17. Are there any reasons why students may be exempt? Who would determine that or oversee it?
18. For planning purposes, approximately how many students will be placed in community service experiences each semester? Each year?
19. How will the mandate be monitored from campus to campus?
20. How will sufficient service opportunities be identified?
21. Must the service experience originate through the university or college? Can students develop and carry out the experiences on their own? How will the requirement be met? Verification of a number of hours? A written reflection of the activity?
22. What are the risk management and liability issues?
23. Does current university and college insurance cover any and all risk issues related to the service work/community work?
24. How will background checks be administered for students who will need them for their community service placements? Fingerprinting? Costs? Timing?
25. How will issues of transportation to the service opportunities be addressed?
26. When several institutions of higher education exist in a particular geographical area, how will student placements be coordinated across segments, if at all, so as not to inundate community agencies?